



J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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February 22, 2007

TO: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – FIVE ACRES -
MAIN CAMPUS, EAST MOUNTAIN, MONTE VISTA AND SOLITA
GROUP HOMES**

We have completed a review of Main Campus, East Mountain, Monte Vista and Solita Group Homes (Group Home or Agency) operated by Five Acres, Incorporated. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Main Campus Group Home is an eighty-bed facility, which provides care for children ages 2-14 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Main Campus Group Home was providing services for seventy-nine DCFS children.

East Mountain, Monte Vista and Solita Group Homes are six-bed facilities, which provide care for children ages 11-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, East Mountain and Solita Group Homes were each providing services for six DCFS children, and Monte Vista Group Home was providing services for four DCFS children.

Five Acres' Group Homes are located in the Fifth District.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

East Mountain, Monte Vista and Solita Group Homes are providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. A corrective action plan for these three homes is not necessary at this time.

Main Campus Group Home needs to provide all children with appropriate staff supervision at all times.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendation made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:asl

http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp

Attachments

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Regina Bette, Executive Director, Five Acres
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Five Acres
Main Campus
760 West Mountain View Street
Altadena, CA 91001-4996
Phone: (626) 798-6793
License Number: 191200236
Rate Classification Level: 12**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

Main Campus Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interior of the Group Home is well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Sixteen

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current, comprehensive, and include short and long term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Sixteen

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Sixteen

Comments:

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Comments:

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication and are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Interviews with children

Sample size: Sixteen

Comments:

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home; however, two children report that they are not always provided with appropriate staff supervision at night as sometimes night staff are not present in the cottage.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendation

1. Five Acres' management provide children with appropriate staff supervision at all times.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Sixteen

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. The children are also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

Five Acres
East Mountain Group Home
1885 East Mountain Street
Pasadena, California 91104
Phone: (626) 798-6793
License Number: 191220045
Rate Classification Level: 12

Five Acres
Monte Vista Group Home
2345 Monte Vista Street
Pasadena, California 91107
Phone: (626) 798-6793
License Number: 191200236
Rate Classification Level: 12

Five Acres
Solita Group Home
1236 Solita Road
Pasadena, California 91103
Phone: (626) 795-5949
License Number: 191290123
Rate Classification Level: 12

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

East Mountain, Monte Vista and Solita Group Homes are located in residential communities. The exteriors of the Group Homes are well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

The interiors of the Group Homes are well maintained. The common quarters are neat and clean. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Homes. The Group Homes provide a home-like environment.

Children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate furniture, lighting, and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable, and the beds all have a full complement of linens. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Homes maintain age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Homes maintain a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two from each Group Home

Comments:

Children meet each Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statements. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement. The treatment team develops and implements the Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) with input from the child. The NSPs are current, comprehensive, and include short and long term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two from each Group Home

Comments:

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. Each Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two from each Group Home

Comments:

The Group Homes provide children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Homes provide transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendations

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Comments:

Children have current court authorizations for psychotropic medication. Documentation confirms that children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Children are informed about their psychotropic medication and are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Interviews with children

Sample size: Two from each Group Home

Comments:

Children are informed about each Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in each Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

Recommendations

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VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two from each Group Home

Comments:

The Group Homes provide appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Homes provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Homes provide children with adequate personal care items. The children are also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

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Founded in 1888 as
The Boys' and Girls'
Aid Society of Los
Angeles County

Participating Member
of United Way, Inc.

Accredited Member
of the Child
Welfare League
of America/Council
on Accreditation
for Children +
Families Services

Please Remember
Five Acres
in Your Will.

December 13, 2006

Candice Rhue
Group Home Audit Supervisor
Department of Auditor-Controller
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 W. Temple Street, Room 515-A
Los Angeles, CA 90021

Dear Ms. Rhue:

Attached please find Five Acres Residential Treatment Program Corrective Action Plan in response to the draft report that documented the results of the audit of our group home programs dated November 13, 2006. Of our 4 programs only the residential program had one recommendation under section IV Personal Rights. If you have any concerns or questions about the (CAP) please contact me by phone at (626)798-6793 ext. 2242, by email at dlecesne@5acres.org, or by letter at the address below.

Sincerely,

Donna Le Cesne
Director of Milieu Services
Residential Treatment Program

Attachment

Five Acres Residential Treatment Program
760 West Mountain View Street
Altadena, CA 91001-4996
Phone: (626) 798-6793
License Number: 191200236
Rate Classification Level: 12

November 2006

VI. Personal Rights

Recommendation:

Two children reported during the interview that when there is a crisis in the cottage and the staff need to perform a containment or escort, the children felt that they were not supervised.

1. Five Acres management provides all children with appropriate staff supervision at all times.

Current Status:

The children at all times have the appropriate ratio of staff to children. The Five Acres residential treatment center is based on a safe, predictable and consistent environment. The ratio of child care staff to children is one-to-five during all waking hours of the children's program, plus support and professional staff. The ratio overnight is one-to-ten. The overnight staff are supervised directly by one shift supervisor who is immediately available for support. However, in a few instances during a crisis, our ratio of staff to children changes. The primary cottage staff can assist with the crisis and a staff from the adjacent cottage steps in to supervise the cottage in a crisis until the On-Duty supervisor arrives to assist. There may be some confusion from the residents during a crisis, because other staff must supervise them when there is an immediate need to assist during the crisis.

In order to ensure consistent supervision of the children, the following procedures have been implemented.

- Staff will use preventative measures to keep a resident from reaching a full scale crisis requiring physical intervention. In addition to proactive measures, staff will avoid all physical interventions until all other resources and interventions have been exhausted and/or the

situation absolutely necessitates a physical intervention to protect residents or staff from suffering immediate serious physical harm. Staff will use interventions that move non-escalated residents away from an escalated resident while continuing to supervise the escalated resident.

- During a crisis situation with a resident that would require staff immediate attention, when a resident does not respond to non-physical interventions and continues to escalate, staff will contact the On-Duty Supervisor and open the doors between the adjoining cottages to alert their neighboring staff of the crisis. The neighboring staff assists in supervising the cottage in a crisis until the On-Duty supervisor arrives to assist.
- When the neighboring staff arrives the staff offering support will determine if the non-escalated residents should come to the adjoining cottage or they may elect to supervise them in their own cottage until the On-Duty Supervisor arrives.
- Person and title for implementing and monitoring the corrective action:
Director of Residential Treatment Program: Will Max
Director of Milieu Services: Donna LeCesne
Residential Manager: Julian Harris
DCFS Quality Assurance Analyst: Natalie Manns

Respectfully,



Donna Le Cesne
Director of Milieu Services
Residential Treatment Program